

No. 605 OF 1878.

FROM

THE FIRST ASSISTANT COLLECTOR,
IN CHARGE, DHÁRWÁR ;

TO

THE COMMISSIONER, SOUTHERN DIVISION.

*Dhárwár Collector's Office,
Camp Dhárwár, 21st February 1878.*

SIR,

I have the honour to submit a Report, No. 75, dated 21st January 1878, from the Honourable Colonel W. C. Anderson, Survey and Settlement Commissioner, S. D., containing his proposals for the revision of the assessment of 130 villages of the old Ránebennur Táluka.

2. In this instance, as in the other tálukas of this collectorate in which revision operations have been carried out of late, the lands have been entirely re-measured. Colonel Anderson clearly demonstrates that this procedure was in the end the most expeditious and economical, and in the tract under report there was an additional reason for entire re-measurement in the fact of a large portion of the lands in the vicinity of the Tungbhadra river being liable to considerable alterations in them consequent on floods.

3. The work of re-classification, as described by Colonel Anderson, seems to have been carried out with the most painstaking care and the precautions devised to prevent liability to error, by means of re-classification of a large percentage of the whole area should have fully effected their object. In the case of rice lands they have been entirely re-classed wherever the area by the new measurement showed an excess of more than one-fourth per cent. over the old area ; while the water classification both in the case of garden and rice lands has been entirely re-cast.

4. The system followed elsewhere for preventing undue raising of rates in certain cases where an excessive difference was apparent between the old and the new classification by lowering the present classification by one class, has been adopted here.

5. Colonel Anderson's remarks in his paras. 10 and 11 on the under-classification of certain lands under the old survey and the reasons given for it are interesting ; it is satisfactory to find that in

the present work such pains have been taken to avoid running into the other extreme of over-rating such lands.

6. The table attached to para. 13 of Colonel Anderson's report shows an increase in arable land during the last 30 years of—

Dry-crop land	...	...	...	4.7	per cent.
Rice land	...	...	...	56.8	„
Garden land	...	...	...	158.5	„

these figures are most satisfactory, and speak strongly in favour of the survey system.

7. I am not personally acquainted with the Ránebennur Táluka, which has never been in my charge, so can add nothing to the description of the distribution of soils and of the climate given by Colonel Anderson in his 16th para. The facilities of communication have been enormously increased in the last thirty years and the táluka may now be said to be well off for roads.

8. In his para. 20 Colonel Anderson remarks on the falling off in the numbers of the weaving population of the táluka—weaving being the chief industry. The data available are not very satisfactory, but the falling off does not appear to be very startling.

9. The figures for “population” given by Colonel Anderson in his table appended to para. 21 do not call for special remark. At the time the table was prepared the numbers were, as he remarks, probably somewhat reduced by emigration. The increase in flat-roofed and tiled-houses is, as noted by Colonel Anderson, a reliable sign of increased prosperity.

10. The marked increase in the number of agricultural cattle, noted by Colonel Anderson, does not strike me as very great, the increase being only 11.46 per cent. in a period of 30 years which, considering the immense area available for grazing, is not enormous. The increase in carts, however, of 246 per cent. is very great, and shows how the improved facilities of communication have opened out trade. Colonel Anderson is probably correct in asserting that both as regards carts and cattle the returns are not correct, and do not give the full numbers, as many of them were employed on the trade to the coast which during the famine was very lucrative work, and many of the cattle also were turned into the jungles to graze.

11. The decrease in the number of sheep, goats, and ponies and horses is accounted for by Colonel Anderson. This collectorate has never been a good one for breeding ponies or horses, and now few or none are bred here.

12. There must, as remarked by Colonel Anderson, be some enormous error in the figures given in Statement No. IV., columns

10 and 11. It is absurd to suppose that out of a total population of 82,469, and with a total number of schools, Government and private, amounting to 60, that there can be only 2,502 persons able to read and write.

13. The statistics shown by Colonel Anderson in the table referred to in his para. 28 regarding the sale, mortgage, and lease of lands, as illustrated by the records of the Registration Department, are most startling. I can myself arrive at no other conclusion than that adopted by Colonel Anderson, viz., that in a large number of cases we have not the whole transaction before us. The sums entered as paid for lands on sale or mortgage are so entirely variable and out of proportion to the assessment of such lands as to be quite inexplicable on any other theory. The most extraordinary feature of all is, perhaps, that noted by Colonel Anderson, of the little contrast shown between the sums realized by sale or mortgage of Inám lands paying only one anna cess, and that of Government lands bearing full survey assessment.

14. The increase in price of grain and other produce is enormous, but is fully accounted for by the largely increased facilities of communication which afford ready market, for the disposal of such produce.

15. In his para. 33 Colonel Anderson points out the increased prices fetched by cotton, both indigenous and exotic. The question of improving the quality of the exotic cotton by maintaining establishments for the proper repairing of saw-gins and by importation from time to time of supplies of fresh seed, is one that has been frequently before Government. The gin-repairing establishments have been of late years dwindled away, and at last entirely collapsed. On the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor to Dhárwár the question of their re-establishment was raised, and His Excellency issued orders for this being at once carried out. Mr. Walton, of the Cotton Department, has commenced this work most energetically, the gin owners have subscribed liberally, and large numbers of cotton gins are coming in for repairs. Mr. Walton is very sanguine of success. It is to be hoped that this not a mere temporary rousing up of the gin owners who have hitherto been so apathetic to their own interests, but I must confess that looking back on my experience of the old gin-repairing factories I am not very hopeful of the success of the measure. The present year, however, is a very favourable one for the project, as cotton promises to be a bumper crop, and there will be full employment for all the available gins.

16. In his para. 35 Colonel Anderson fully reviews the revenue history of the tract under report from the year 1837-38. The complete cessation of remissions in the later years is a most

satisfactory proof of the increasing prosperity of the people and of the soundness of the assessments. The amount of outstanding balance at the end of the famine year 1876-77, viz., Rs. 4,756, is trifling, as compared with the total realizable revenue.

*Para. 38, Forests. **

17. With reference to Colonel Anderson's para. 38 there is, it seems, an error* in the figures given by him in columns 8 and 14 of Appendix D, for the year 1876-77. The figures in column 8 should have been 34,241, *i.e.*, just 8,027 acres more than are shown in the table. The difference of 8,027 acres being on account of unoccupied assessed arable land set apart mainly for kurans and grazing. The figures in column 14 will require to be altered to 247,839, the same as for the preceding year.

18. With the exception of last year 1876-77—the “Famine year”—the number of notices served on revenue defaulters is a very small; and the fact that with the exception of the comparatively small sum of Rs. 4,756, which remained outstanding at the close of the year, all the revenue was recovered without recourse to distraint, speaks well for the prosperity and general condition of the agriculturists. The outstandings will, as anticipated by Colonel Anderson, probably be recovered during the current year.

19. I now come to the most important point, viz., the rates which Colonel Anderson proposes to introduce on revision.

Captain Wingate, in his original settlement of the taluka, divided it into two groups for dry-crop soils with two rates of assessment, viz., one group to the west with a maximum rate of Rs. 1-6-0, and the other to the east with a maximum of Rs. 1-4-0. Colonel Anderson divides it into four groups with four maximum rates as under:—

No.	Villages.		Maximum Rate.		
			Rs.	a.	p.
1	35.	Bordering on Poona and Harrihur road ...	2	0	0
2	24.	To south-west of above villages ...	1	12	0
3	63.	To east and north-east of the taluka ...	1	10	0
4	8.	Extreme north-east	1	6	0

* Note to para. 17 by the Survey Commissioner.—The Collector is mistaken. It has been ascertained beyond doubt that the figures given by the Survey Commissioner in para. 38 of his report and in the Appendix are correct, the area of about 8,000 acres having been removed by order of the Collector from the arable assessed area of waste land and set apart as “kuran” and entered as “unassessed” with the sanction of the Revenue Commissioner.

These rates being precisely the same as those introduced in the old Bankápur Táluka two years ago. Although I am not personally acquainted with the Ránebennur Tluáka, I have a thorough knowledge of the present Bankápur Táluka, of which I have been in charge for the last five years; and Ránebennur Táluka is, I believe, so very similar to Bankápur in every way, that the rates which are applicable to the one are equally so to the other táluka. The rates introduced into Bankápur have proved satisfactory, and I have never heard a murmur against them. The maximum rate for the rice lands is also the same that was adopted in old Bankápur, and similarly a maximum of Rs. 12 has been settled for bágáit lands. This rate is, in my opinion, a fair one, and its introduction will probably result, as anticipated by Colonel Anderson, in an extension in garden lands and consequent increase in revenue. The low average rate of assessment on garden lands, as shown by the returns under the present settlement, viz., Rs. 15-6-0, is fully accounted for by Colonel Anderson.

20. The holders of Inám lands availing themselves of water for irrigational purposes from tanks constructed by Government will, of course, as pointed out by Colonel Anderson, be called upon to pay water-rate.

21. The average increase in revenue calculated upon the rates proposed is 40·1 per cent., and this does not appear by any means excessive. In the first group of villages, 35 in number, the average increase is 48·8 per cent.; but considering the advantages of improved communications enjoyed by these villages this increase is not, in my opinion, too great. In the few individual villages (7 in all) shown in Appendix E., in which the increase exceeds 60 per cent., two reasons given by Colonel Anderson are satisfactory, and it appears that such individual cases are fewer in this táluka than they have been elsewhere.

22. From Colonel Anderson's remarks on the probable result of the settlement of the Judi on Inám lands by the imposition of Mamul Judi or the present survey assessment, whichever may be the lower, it appears that he thinks that the consequent increase in revenue will not suffice to meet the increased emoluments payable to village officers by percentage on the revised rates; but even if this be the case, the advantage of having the Judi settled on a fixed and fair basis, will, in my opinion, quite out-balance every tenable * loss in revenue that the change may involve.

23. The cost of the revision of assessment amounts in all, according to Colonel Anderson's estimate, to Rs. 47,856, and he estimates the increase in annual revenue at Rs. 50,000, viz., 46,142